

SELECTION GUIDELINES

FOR

MONTGOMERY COUNTY



A USERS GUIDE FOR HIRING MANAGERS

MEMORANDUM

TO: Selection Official

FROM: Office of Human Resources
Staffing and Organizational Development Team

SUBJECT: Selection Interview Process

The selection interview process for a new staff member in your department/agency is one of your most important job duties. It is the policy of Montgomery County to conduct all employment activities in a manner that will ensure equal employment opportunity for all persons without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, genetic status, or political affiliation. We have an obligation to assure that all people seeking employment, a promotion or a transfer opportunity with Montgomery County have an equal opportunity to gain it, and that individuals competing for positions are treated fairly.

As suggested by guidelines enacted by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and as a result of our own observations, we have made the decision to formalize the selection process to achieve the goals stated in the above paragraph. In addition to achieving these goals this will also ensure consistency in how selection interviews are conducted throughout the County.

Attached is information describing how the selection process should be conducted. If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact a Human Resources Specialist on the Staffing and Organizational Development Team.



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Selection Interviews: A Tool Kit For Managers

Confidentiality

Identifying Candidates for Interview

**Assembling the Interview Panel and Developing Interview
Questions and Evaluation Criteria**

Conducting the Selection Interviews

Reference Checks and Candidate Notification

After the Interview

SELECTION INTERVIEWS A TOOL KIT FOR MANAGERS

CONFIDENTIALITY

Please remember that all candidate information is CONFIDENTIAL. You may not discuss candidate names, rating categories or any other information pertaining to candidates or the rating process with anyone not DIRECTLY involved in the selection process. Questions from individuals who are not directly involved in the selection process should be referred to the Staffing Specialist who conducted the recruitment.

IDENTIFYING CANDIDATES FOR INTERVIEW

- Begin by reviewing the class specification, position description and job announcement to identify the most important Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSAs) and behavioral traits needed to perform the duties and responsibilities of the position.
- Review the application of EVERY candidate in the highest rating category of the eligible list based on the KSAs.
- If possible, interview all candidates in the highest rating category. If this is impractical due to the number of candidates in the category, select candidates for interview based on their possession of these KSAs.
- If not all are interviewed, document the process by which those chosen to interview were selected.

ASSEMBLING THE INTERVIEW PANEL AND DEVELOPING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

Composition of Interview Panel

- Must be Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), i.e. knowledgeable of job and KSAs.
- Should consist of an odd number of panel members when possible to break ties in the decision making process.
- Should be diverse (gender, race, ethnicity). To ensure diversity, individuals from other departments/agencies as well as from outside the County may be included as panel members.
- Individuals who served as raters in the testing process for the position should not be interviewers in the selection process to ensure a fair and impartial process.

Developing Interview Questions and Evaluation Criteria

- Select interview questions that relate to the KSAs and behavioral traits outlined in the class specification, position description and job announcement. See suggested interview questions attached.
- Ask open ended questions that allow them to provide descriptive information rather than just "yes" "no" answers.
- The areas being evaluated may be weighted, depending on the criticality of different KSAs or behavioral traits the questions are measuring.
- Utilize interview evaluation criteria and forms to evaluate responses to the questions for each applicant. Interview evaluation criteria and forms are attached.

CONDUCTING THE SELECTION INTERVIEWS

- Make sure that all members of the interview panel understand the requirements of the job, the KSAs and behavioral traits needed by the successful applicant.
- Make sure that all members of the interview panel read and fully understand the evaluation process, questions and criteria prior to beginning the interviews.
- Maintain fairness and equity by reminding panel members of the importance of remaining impartial and maintaining confidentiality of the selection interview process; information is given to appropriate staff on a need to know basis.

The Interview

- Greet applicant in the waiting area.
- Provide applicant with a copy of the job announcement and interview questions for review prior to the start of the interview. Allowing them some time to prepare answers to questions will reduce anxiety, ensure more comprehensive information is provided and save time during the interview. Make sure the same amount of time is provided to each candidate.
- Once the applicant is brought into the panel room, introduce the panel members. Shake hands if the applicant extends theirs and generally try to put the applicant at ease.
- Sell the job and the organization but remain realistic. Describe the selection interview process including how much time you have set aside for the interview.
- *Ask all applicants the same questions.*
- Have each member of the panel ask at least one question.
- Listen to the applicant, refrain from doing too much talking.
- During the interview process, *only job related information should be considered.* Special care must be taken to ensure that all applicants are treated the same. Any reference to race, gender, ethnicity, medical or disability status, national origin, marital status, age, pregnancy, number or ages of children, plans to have children, lifestyle, religion, organization/club membership, arrest record, credit affairs, associating with current employees or other non-job-related criteria must be avoided. Even if the applicant brings up the issue, do not pursue it, return to job related information. Should you need specific guidance in this area, please contact the Office of Human Resources (OHR).
- At the conclusion of your planned questions, allow time to answer any questions the applicant may have regarding the position.
- End the interview on a friendly note, thank the applicant for his/her interest and describe the next step including duration of interviews, and when a decision will be made.

Interview Panel Responsibilities

- Stay focused on the job and its requirements. Remember, any oral statement that an interviewer makes during the interview can lead to potential liability.
- Interview panel members must complete an individual evaluation form and then together a consensus evaluation form for each applicant interviewed. Care should be taken to only record remarks that relate to the requirements of the job on these forms as they will become a permanent record of the selection process. Complete your evaluation of one candidate before moving on to the next one.
- Once all candidates have been interviewed, panel members should review their evaluation forms and determine the top candidate(s), based on evaluations received in the interview.
- All selection material, including how candidates were selected for interview (if not all are interviewed), evaluation forms and interview notes should be placed in a file and maintained in case needed by the Office of Human Resources if questions surface concerning the selection of a candidate. Federal Law requires that all records be kept for three years.

SALARY NEGOTIATIONS

Before the selection interview concludes, you should have a general understanding of the candidate's salary requirements. Prior to conducting selection interviews you should have an idea of the salary you feel is reasonable, what you wish to offer and how much you are willing to negotiate.

In determining the salary you wish to offer a candidate, you should consider internal salary equity, salary history, current market value of the job and working conditions. All of these issues should be a part of your salary negotiations.

- **Internal Salary Equity**
Is the salary you would like to offer in line with (usually not above) the salaries of your current employees with similar training and experience in the same job class? Does this candidate bring a skill set or unique experience to the organization that others in the class do not possess?
- **Previous Salary History**
Is the salary you intend to offer the candidate reasonable considering their salary history, particularly their current or most recent salary for a similar position?
- **Market Value**
Is the salary reasonable as compared to others in the same profession both inside and outside of the County? There are web sites that will assist you in determining current market value of a certain profession or field of work. An example of such a web site is www.salary.com. Or you can contact the Classification and Compensation Team at 240-777-1536. They have salary survey information from other jurisdictions. Your Staffing Specialist may also be able to assist you in obtaining this information.

- Working Conditions
 - Is the candidate currently employed? If not, how long have they been unemployed?
 - Are they currently working as a consultant with few or no benefits?
 - Will they have a shorter commute if they accept your job?
 - How do their benefits compare with the benefits offered by the County?
 - Are you able to offer a flexible schedule, mentoring, training opportunities, or other desirable perks?
 - Will this job be providing secondary income if they already retired from another employer?

Remember that a higher salary may not be the only benefit a potential employee is seeking. You should negotiate salary from a “total compensation” perspective. Discuss the benefits the County offers with the selected candidate and try to determine which benefit is of interest/value to him/her. If you offer a benefit that the candidate values, he/she may accept a lower salary. Be sure to convey to the candidate that Montgomery County has a lot to offer its employees. Generally, it is a great place to work!

REFERENCE CHECKS AND CANDIDATE NOTIFICATION

- Check job-related references for the top candidates only. If there is only one clear choice, just check the job - related references for that candidate. Appropriate areas of inquiry in a reference check include **job related** factors such as technical or managerial skills, quality and quantity of work, degree of supervision required, dates of employment, and salary history. Subject areas not related to the work performed by the applicant which should be avoided include the applicant’s social activities, religious and political beliefs, marital status, children, residence, medical status or disability. A form to aid in checking references is included in this package (see page 37).
- Select the candidate(s) to be recommended for hiring and contact OHR with a recommendation. Remember that only OHR can make a formal job offer unless otherwise delegated.
- After the selectee(s) have accepted the offer, written notification of non-selection must be mailed to the applicants. A sample notification letter can be obtained from your Staffing Specialist in OHR.

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- Do not debrief those not selected. Rather than telling them why they were not selected, work to help them correct or enhance what kept them from being selected.
- Remind raters of the confidentiality statement and that they should not feel pressured to discuss their deliberations with any individual inquiring about the selection process.

Preparing For The Interview

PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

1. Identify dimensions that are important for the position (see attached). Identify the questions you wish to ask to assess each dimension (choosing from the attached list or drafting original ones). If you write your own questions, ensure they are job related and will not elicit information of a personal nature.
2. Identify how many questions you will ask for each dimension and how many questions you will ask in total. Remember, you will ask the same questions of all applicants interviewed.
 - a. Include questions that elicit different information (asking the same question phrased different ways does not provide new information).
 - b. Consider the length of responses you anticipate hearing to determine how much time should be allotted for each interview. Remember you must leave time between applicants to evaluate their performance (approximately 15 minutes, depending upon how much information interviewers will have to evaluate).
 - c. Consider if this will be the only interview or if more than one round of interviews will be conducted. Each interview should be different or there is no need for more than one.
3. Type out the questions to be asked and draft preferred responses to those questions for the job to be filled. This sheet of questions will be used by the interviewers to ask the questions and then evaluate responses.
4. Fill in the first column of the evaluation forms with the dimensions pertinent to the job and the question numbers that relate to each dimension. For example, if "Job Qualifications" is to be assessed, write "Job Qualifications" on the form under "criteria" and then list the question numbers that will evaluate Job Qualifications.
5. When selecting individuals to serve as interviewers choose individuals who are subject matter experts. It is a good idea not to include individuals who will work under or in the same job as the selected applicant as interviewers. This may create animosity that they are not under consideration for the job or an issue of indebtedness for the selection. Individuals from other units, departments or other agencies can be utilized as subject matter experts for the purposes of interviewing.
6. Identify for the interviewers how many candidates they should recommend to move forward/for final consideration as a result of the interview.
7. Copy: enough forms for each applicant being interviewed, questions and answers for interviewers, a sheet of questions only for interviewers to read from when the applicant is in the room, and copies of the questions only for applicants. Identify any material relative to the County or the position to be given to the applicant to read prior to going before the interview panel. Identify if interviewers will have resumes to consider in their evaluation.
8. Ensure panel members read over all materials and completely understand what they are to do prior to beginning the interviews.

9. At the conclusion, make sure no applicant leaves with the questions, also, maintain all notes and forms ensuring all interviewers signed and dated the forms and stapled their notes to the back of their individual evaluation forms.
10. FOR POSITIONS DESIGNATED AS REQUIRING MULTILINGUAL SKILLS:
 - a. Seek out an individual who is proficient in English and the second language required to serve as a member of the interview panel (preferably chosen from the Interpreter List in the OHR Resource Library).
 - b. Consider asking one or two interview questions in the second language required to identify applicants who can communicate effectively in both English and the second language. This will serve as an initial assessment of bilingual skills, it will not substitute for language certification provided by OHR.

Evaluation Dimensions

EVALUATION DIMENSIONS

JOB QUALIFICATIONS – Does the applicant possess a good educational/training background and/or stable work history and does it relate to the duties and responsibilities of the position? Does the applicant possess skills or personal characteristics/traits that would be beneficial in this position? Does the applicant maintain up-to-date knowledge of the field/area of expertise consistent with the level of the position? Does the applicant have a level of skill/expertise to conduct business at the level required of this position or to learn this within an acceptable training period?

JOB INTEREST/COMMITMENT – Does the applicant show a real interest, enthusiasm and willingness to perform the functions of the job? Does the applicant possess a clear understanding of and commitment to the job? Does the applicant demonstrate support of the County's vision and guiding principles?

CUSTOMER SERVICE ORIENTATION – Does the applicant demonstrate a desire to help others? Does the applicant demonstrate a willingness to work collaboratively with internal and external customers to identify needs and provide quality service? Does the applicant recognize the importance of courtesy, sensitivity and patience in dealing with customers, especially in dealing with difficult or emotional individuals/situations?

SOUND JUDGMENT/PROBLEM SOLVING – Does the applicant analyze information/situations effectively, weigh factors, troubleshoot and identify problems, draw valid conclusions and make sound decisions? Does the applicant demonstrate a willingness to change a course of action if and when new information dictates? Does applicant demonstrate a willingness to accept responsibility for problem solving and decision making?

PERSONAL ACCOUNTABILITY/ETHICS – Does the applicant accept personal responsibility for accomplishing work assignments in a timely and appropriate manner? Does the applicant value good work habits, responsiveness and integrity? Does the applicant apply fair and ethical standards in work and stand up for these beliefs even when it conflicts with the beliefs of others? Does applicant work to instill trust and confidence in others? Does applicant respect and maintain confidentiality?

SENSITIVITY/DIVERSITY AWARENESS – Does the applicant demonstrate a concern for the feelings, thoughts and values of others? Is applicant sensitive to how people of diverse backgrounds and cultures interpret and express ideas and information? Does applicant demonstrate an understanding of how differences in race, sex, religion, natural origin, etc. affect behavior and values? Does applicant find non-threatening ways to approach others about sensitive issues and resolve situations where individuals have competing and conflicting goals?

RESULTS ORIENTATION – Is the applicant assertive and focused on obtaining measurable improvements in the quality of service or a process? Does the applicant take initiative and seek ways to obtain improvement through creativity, attention to detail, optimizing use of resources and working collaboratively with others?

PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION – Does the applicant organize and plan for the accomplishment of work? Does the applicant identify time frames and deadlines? Does the applicant demonstrate the flexibility to reassess and change priorities as new information/situations dictate? Does the applicant consider the impact of their work on others they are collaborating with or those depending on their work product?

PRESENTATION/COMMUNICATION – Does the applicant organize ideas clearly and concisely when communicating verbally? Does the applicant demonstrate a comfort level in utilizing automated communication resources in the performance of work (e.g., computer, software, voice mail, e-mail, fax and other applicable equipment). Does the applicant demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively in written format?

Interview Question Database

Job Qualifications

Job Interest/Commitment

Customer Service Orientation

Sound Judgment/Problem Solving

Personal Accountability/Ethics

Sensitivity/Diversity Awareness

Results Orientation

Planning and Organization

Presentation/Communication

Closing Questions

INTERVIEW QUESTION DATABASE

JOB QUALIFICATIONS

- What strengths did you rely on in your last position to make you successful in your work?
- Describe what you see as your strengths related to this position. Describe what you see as your weaknesses related to this position.
- How would your co-workers describe your work style/habits?
- Tell us a bit about your work background, and then give us a description of how you think it relates to our current opening.
- What skill sets do you think you would bring to this position?
- Why should we hire YOU?
- Would you share with us a recent accomplishment of which you are most proud?
- How do you stay current with changes in (name area of expertise).
- What one area do you really need to work on in your current career to become more effective on a day-to-day basis?
- What was your favorite position, and what role did your boss play in making it so unique?
- What was your least favorite position, and what role did your boss play in your career at that point?

Below examples with answers:

- Briefly describe the following:
 - A. Your educational background and work history
 - B. Your strengths and weaknesses in education and work history
 - C. How your education/training and work history have prepared you for this position.

Answer - Candidate should provide a thorough response that addresses the extent and relevancy of education and work history. Candidate should identify strengths and weaknesses and discuss how they relate to the job. Candidate should identify any specific education/training or special experiences which would contribute to successful adaptation to the job.
- What personal characteristics do you possess that will aid in your success in this position?

Answer - Candidate may mention such things as perseverance, taking on assignments and completing them with little direction, good ability to follow directions, attention to detail, interest in investigating new things and new methods of completing tasks, upbeat personality, ability to problem solve, work as a group, follow-up, etc.

JOB INTEREST/COMMITMENT

- What do you think you would do for this organization that someone else would not?
- Describe an ideal work environment or 'the perfect job.'
- What is your interpretation of "success?"
- Why have you applied for this position?
- Would you please describe your interest in becoming (title of position).
- Tell me about your understanding of the job you are applying for.
- What do you know about Montgomery County (Dept.)?
- Why do you want to work here?

JOB INTEREST/COMMITMENT (cont.)

- After learning about this opportunity, what made you take the next step and apply for the job?
- What are your short and long-term goals?
- What are your career path interests?
- What do you think about SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures)?
- Based upon what you have read and heard, what ideas do you have about continuing and increasing the success of this company?
- If you are hired for this position, in 5 years from now, how do you think this organization will be different?

Below examples with answers:

- Please explain why you are interested in this position and how it fits in with your career goals.
Answer - Candidate should identify the positive aspects of the position, ability to be part of the organization, make a difference, provide customer service, learn from others in the field. Candidate should identify an enthusiasm for growing with the organization and moving forward in their career to accept more responsibility within the organization.
- What do you believe to be the negative aspects of this job and what actions will you take to maintain your enthusiasm for the job, even when working around employees who have lost their enthusiasm?
Answer - Candidate should identify negative aspects by demonstrating an understanding of the most difficult aspects of the job (e.g.,). To maintain enthusiasm candidate should mention not dwelling on negatives, talking to supervisors and others on the job for ideas to enhance the job and address the negatives, or talking through the problems to relieve tension. Concentrate on wellness and exercise to relieve stress, training to improve skills and learn new ones, meeting new people and developing working relationships to improve negative aspects of the job.

CUSTOMER SERVICE ORIENTATION

- Describe a difficult time you have had dealing with an employee, customer, or co-worker. Why was it difficult? How did you handle it? What was the outcome?
- Tell me about a time when you went out of your way to provide great customer service to a customer.
- Describe a process or system that you improved so customers would be better served.
- Tell me about a time when you knew that your customer might not get what he or she needed on time. How did you handle this?
- Tell me about a time you had to say “No” to a customer because it was against company policy.
- Tell me about a time when you had trouble working with a difficult or demanding customer. How did you handle this?
- Tell me about a situation in which you “lost it” or did not do your best with a customer. What did you do about this?

SOUND JUDGMENT/PROBLEM SOLVING

- What methods do you use to make decisions? When do you find it most difficult to make a decision?
- Describe a decision you made which would normally have been made by your supervisor. What was the outcome?
- Give an example of how you have reinvented or redefined a job to meet your company's changing needs. What pro-active steps did you take to increase the output of your position? (Results Orientation also)
- How do you approach taking action without getting prior approval? (Results Orientation also)

PERSONAL ACCOUNTABILITY/ETHICS

- If someone told you that you had made an error, describe how you would react and what you would say in your defense?
- If someone asked for your assistance with a matter outside the parameters of your job description, what would you do? (Customer Service Orientation also)
- Suppose your supervisor asked you to get information for them that you know is confidential and he/she should not have access to. What would you do?
- Give an example of a time when you were trying to meet a deadline, you were interrupted, and did not make the deadline. How did you respond?
- Explain the phrase "work ethic" and describe yours.
- Describe a time when you have come across questionable business practices; how did you handle the situation?
- Have you ever faced a significant ethical problem at work? How did you handle it?

SENSITIVITY/DIVERSITY AWARENESS

- If you observed a co-worker who made inappropriate sexual or racial remarks to another employee, and it was obvious to you that the situation was creating an uncomfortable environment, what would you do?
- What kind of people do you find it most difficult to work with? For example, assume you are in a situation where you have to deal with a person very different from yourself and you are finding it difficult. What would you do?

RESULTS ORIENTATION

- Where do you see yourself in five years?
- Can you tell me a time during your previous employment when you suggested a better way to perform a process?
- What can you do for us if we hire you, and when should we expect to see concrete results?
- Tell me about a personal or career goal that you have accomplished and why that was important to you.
- What do you think are the best and worst parts of working in a team environment? How do you handle it?
- What was your most creative achievement at work?

RESULTS ORIENTATION (cont.)

- What would you have liked to do more of in your last position? What held you back?
- Tell me about your current position or most recent position and how you helped the organization accomplish its goals and mission.
- What have you done for a company that made a difference and for which you believe you will be remembered?
- What makes you stand out among your peers?
- What would your current supervisors say makes you the most valuable to them?
- How have you added value to your current job over time?
- Is it your natural inclination to report to some one else for sign-off or do you operate better with independent responsibility and authority?
- Every company has quirks and its own amount of dysfunction. How dysfunctional was your last company and how much tolerance do you have for dealing with a company's shortcomings and inconsistencies?
- What do you do when others resist or reject your ideas?
- In what areas do you typically have the least amount of patience at work?
- In hindsight, how could you have improved your performance at your last position?

PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION

- Suppose you are in a situation where deadlines and priorities change frequently and rapidly. How would you handle it?
- How would your past employers describe your response to hectic or stressful situation?
- How have you participated in planning work and/or processes?
- Is it more important to be a detail oriented person, or a big picture person? Explain.
- How would you describe the amount of structure, direction and feedback that you need to excel?
- Would you consider yourself more of a task-oriented or project oriented worker?
- How do you handle interruptions, breaks in routine and last minute changes?

PRESENTATION/COMMUNICATION

- This position requires both good writing and verbal skills for good communication. When it comes to giving information to employees that can be done either way, do you prefer to write a memo OR talk to employees?

*Evaluation of this dimension should be based on such things as poise, bearing, articulation, mannerisms, gestures, eye contact, vocal inflection, and word choice as well as comfort with writing and using office machines.

CLOSING QUESTIONS

- If we were to make you an offer, tell me ideally when you'd like to start. How much notice do you need to give to your current employer?
- At what dollar amount would you accept our job offer and at what dollar amount would you reject it?
- What final questions can I answer for you that would help you make an informed career decision?

Scenario Questions

-CONFIDENTIAL-

SCENARIO QUESTIONS, INCLUDING SUGGESTED RESPONSES, DESIGNED TO EVALUATE THE EVALUATION DIMENSIONS LISTED ABOVE ARE AVAILABLE TO ALL HIRING MANAGERS. DUE TO THEIR CONFIDENTIAL NATURE THEY ARE NOT INCLUDED IN THIS DOCUMENT. YOU MAY CONTACT YOUR HUMAN RESOURCES STAFFING SPECIALIST TO OBTAIN THESE QUESTIONS, BUT IT IS IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN THESE QUESTIONS IN A SECURED LOCATION.

THESE QUESTIONS WILL ONLY BE EFFECTIVE IF APPLICANTS PARTICIPATING IN THE SELECTION INTERVIEW DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO THEM. PLEASE BE MINDFUL THAT MANY APPLICANTS FOR MANY POSITIONS ARE OUR OWN EMPLOYEES. IF THESE QUESTIONS ARE RELEASED THEY WILL NO LONGER BE EFFECTIVE.

Selection Panel Evaluation Forms

Selection Panel Individual Evaluation Form (3 category scale)

Selection Panel Consensus Evaluation Form (3 category scale)

Selection Panel Individual Evaluation Form (5 category scale)

Selection Panel Consensus Evaluation Form (5 category scale)

SELECTION PANEL INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION FORM

(Job Title)

APPLICANT: _____

CRITERIA	BELOW AVERAGE	AVERAGE	ABOVE AVERAGE
Fill in dimensions to be evaluated here and the question numbers that will relate to those dimensions (see examples below)			
Job Qualifications (Question #1, and 2)			
Job Interest/Perception (Question #)			
Customer Service Orientation (Question #)			
Sound Judgment/Problem Solving (Question #)			
Personal Accountability/Ethics (Question #)			

Signature

Date

Notes:

SELECTION PANEL CONSENSUS EVALUATION FORM

(Job Title)

APPLICANT: _____

CRITERIA	BELOW AVERAGE	AVERAGE	ABOVE AVERAGE
Fill in dimensions to be evaluated here and the question numbers that will relate to those dimensions (see examples below)			
Job Qualifications (Question #1, and 2)			
Job Interest/Perception (Question #)			
Customer Service Orientation (Question #)			
Sound Judgment/Problem Solving (Question #)			
Personal Accountability/Ethics (Question #)			

Panel Recommendation: Recommended_____ Not Recommended_____ Consider at a later date_____

Signature Date Notes:

SELECTION PANEL INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION FORM

(Job Title)

APPLICANT: _____

CRITERIA	WELL BELOW AVERAGE	BELOW AVERAGE	AVERAGE	ABOVE AVERAGE	WELL ABOVE AVERAGE
Fill in dimensions to be evaluated here and the question numbers that will relate to those dimensions (see examples below)					
Job Qualifications (Question #1, and 2)					
Job Interest/Perception (Question #)					
Customer Service Orientation (Question #)					
Sound Judgment/Problem Solving (Question #)					
Personal Accountability/Ethics (Question #)					

Signature

Date

Notes:

SELECTION PANEL CONSENSUS EVALUATION FORM

(Job Title)

APPLICANT: _____

CRITERIA	WELL BELOW AVERAGE	BELOW AVERAGE	AVERAGE	ABOVE AVERAGE	WELL ABOVE AVERAGE
Fill in dimensions to be evaluated here and the question numbers that will relate to those dimensions (see examples below)					
Job Qualifications (Question #1, and 2)					
Job Interest/Perception (Question #)					
Customer Service Orientation (Question #)					
Sound Judgment/Problem Solving (Question #)					
Personal Accountability/Ethics (Question #)					

Panel Recommendation: Recommended _____ Not Recommended _____ Consider at a later date _____

Signature

Date

Notes:

Instructions For Interviewers

INSTRUCTIONS FOR INTERVIEWERS

As part of this process you are responsible for assessing each candidate's suitability for this position based on the identified criteria. This requires your good and fair judgment of the candidate's potential for effective performance in this position, and a careful evaluation of the quality of his/her experience, skills and attributes.

Remember that all candidate information is CONFIDENTIAL. You may not discuss your ratings, who applied for the position, or any other information pertinent to the candidates or the rating process with anyone who is not DIRECTLY involved in the rating process. Questions from individuals not directly involved in the process should be referred to the Staffing Specialist who conducted the recruitment.

During this review, candidates are to be evaluated from a general perspective of experience, training, and expertise. Based on your own judgment and knowledge, you should evaluate the diversity, duration, and overall usefulness of each applicant's training, experience, and expertise as it pertains to the responsibilities of the position.

Evaluations should be based on one of the following scales:

THREE LEVEL SCALE (For interviewing smaller numbers of applicants):

Below Average – applicant is not capable of performing the duties/responsibilities of this position as they relate to the functional area under review. He/she has no substantive experience relative to this area.

Average – applicant is adequately prepared to assume responsibility for the functional area under review. However, applicant does not possess a high level of expertise in the area and would require an average amount of training to perform at an effective level.

Above Average – applicant has outstanding credentials and would be considered very highly qualified in the functional area under review. Applicant reveals an expert level of knowledge/experience such that no additional training would be required for applicant to perform in this functional area. Superior candidate.

FIVE LEVEL SCALE (For interviewing larger numbers of applicants):

Well Below Average – applicant is not capable of performing the duties/responsibilities of this position as they relate to the functional area under review. He/she has no substantive experience relative to this area.

Below Average – applicant is somewhat capable of performing the responsibilities of this position as they relate to the functional area under review. He/she has some relevant knowledge/experience relative to this area but would require a substantive amount of training to adequately perform in this area.

Average – applicant is adequately prepared to assume responsibility for the functional area under review. However, applicant does not possess a high level of expertise in the area and would require an average amount of training to perform at an effective level.

Above Average – applicant has credentials significantly above the average candidate and would be considered well qualified in the functional area under review. Applicant reveals a high level of knowledge/experience and would require a small amount of training to be competent in this area.

Well Above Average – applicant has outstanding credentials and would be considered very highly qualified in the functional area under review. Applicant reveals an expert level of knowledge/experience such that no additional training would be required for applicant to perform in this functional area. Superior candidate.

During the interview process you should:

Review all information provided. Often the resume or application will be available for you to review either before or after the candidate has participated in the interview.

Take notes on an applicant's responses to the questions as they are speaking. Do not try to evaluate their performance until they have left the room.

Once the candidate has left the room, weigh strengths and weaknesses of experience and training within each area and use your own judgment in determining the best evaluation for each candidate using the individual evaluation form.

Evaluate each criteria separately, do not let your evaluation in one area influence your evaluation of a candidate relative to other areas. It is not uncommon for a candidate to do very well in one area and poorly in another.

An individual evaluation form should be completed by each interviewer for each candidate. Refer to your notes and decide on a tentative evaluation for each candidate for each of the dimensional areas.

Once you have completed your individual evaluation you should discuss strengths and weaknesses in each area with other interviewers to determine a final evaluation you can all be happy with. While consensus is not required, it is the best determinant as it takes into consideration the perspectives of each interviewer. Interviewers should complete one consensus form for each candidate.

All interviewers must discuss each candidate, if an interviewer does not speak up you need to ensure they provide their opinions before making final determinations on each candidate.

It is not necessary for your individual evaluations to match the evaluations of the other interviewers or the consensus form. It should be viewed as your preliminary evaluation and should be subject to change once you discuss the candidate's performance with the other interviewers.

Remember most specific job tasks can be learned on the job. Your primary focus should be in looking for the individual(s) with the potential and interest to succeed in the position if selected.

This process is not a mathematical process, based on interviewers feelings of which candidates should be hired you as a group will make a recommendation of 'recommended' or 'not recommended' (for those you do not recommend). Those you do not recommend at this time due to a particular number to be sent forward or other factors should be recommended for 'consideration at a later date'.

Any particular notes interviewers feel the hiring authority should consider may be provided in the section labeled 'notes'.

All interviewers should sign and date the consensus form to indicate they agree with the recommendation. Final documentation for each candidate should consist of the individual evaluation form with each interviewer's notes (signed and with pages numbered) stapled to the back of each and the consensus form.

Rating Biases

RATING BIASES

When people evaluate the performance of others, bias can creep into the process. Described below are eight types of rating bias.

First Impression Effect - This bias evidences itself when a candidate does very well at the beginning of the process (i.e., exercise, questions, etc.), but then "poops out". The rater observing this candidate may become so impressed with that early behavior that a high rating is given, even though the total behavior warranted a lower rating. Related to this rating error is the Last Impression or Recency Effect where behavior occurring at the end of the process, good or bad, is given undue weight by not taking into consideration the total behavior.

Halo Effect - This bias evidences itself in the tendency to allow a candidate's performance on one dimension to influence the rating on all the other dimensions, even when there is little evidence for such ratings on those other dimensions. It is important that raters try to keep the dimensions as distinct as possible. For example, a candidate may show a great deal of effective written communication skill, but this does not necessarily imply an equal amount of decision making, problem analysis, or judgment skills. Related to this rating error is the Horn Effect where a candidate does poorly in one area and is seen to be deficient in all areas (e.g., nonverbal cues). Some of the dimensions are closely related, of course, and skill in one area often goes along with skill in another. Nevertheless, careful attention to the amount of actual behavior justifying a rating will help to avoid this type of rating bias.

Leniency Effect - This bias evidences itself in the tendency to be an "easy" rater. It is often less offensive to be generous than it is to make objective, but lower, ratings. Conversely there is also the tendency, among a fewer number of raters, to be excessively and unjustifiably harsh. The key is to focus attention on the behavior observed in the process.

Central Tendency Effect - This bias evidences itself in the predisposition to "play it safe" by avoiding the use of extreme ratings, even when they are called for and justified. Sometimes raters fail to assign a high or low rating on the assumption that no candidate could be that bad or good. However, it is very important to make fair distinctions among the candidates, and the full range of scores should therefore be utilized.

Contrast Effect - This bias evidences itself when a particular candidate's evaluation is influenced by the evaluation of the preceding candidate. For example, when two candidates are rated consecutively who are quite far apart due to the differences between them, an average candidate can appear excessively good or excessively bad in contrast to the other very "low" or "high" candidate, respectively. Once again, the key is to focus upon the actual amount and nature of the behavior observed.

Similar-To-Me-Effect - This bias, also known as the Similarity effect, evidences itself when candidates remind you of your own approach to situations thereby resulting in higher ratings than are justified. The reverse situation can also occur, resulting in lower ratings than the actual behavior would dictate. Here it is important to remember that the rater is not the one being evaluated, and the candidate is not the rater.

Stereotyping - This bias evidences itself when a rater forms generalizations about how people of a given gender, religion, or race think, act, feel or respond. The key is to focus on what a candidate actually says or does and not on what the candidate is expected to demonstrate.

Negative Emphasis - This bias evidences itself when undue weight is given to negative information. Often without realizing it, raters attach a significant amount of weight to unfavorable information, far more than they attach to positive information. The important thing is to focus on the actual amount of behavior demonstrated and weigh factors accurately.

It should be realized that the rating biases described above may influence rater evaluations. This does not mean that they automatically will have some impact. Awareness of the types of rating bias which may occur however, is an important step in reducing their potential effects.

Interview Subjects

INTERVIEW SUBJECTS

SUBJECT	ILLEGAL	LEGAL IF JOB RELATED
AGE	Any question which tends to identify applicants between 40-64 years of age is illegal. EXAMPLE: "Do you remember the 1940 election?"	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject. The HR Specialist may verify age, if necessary, to ensure legally set minimum age limits are met.
CITIZENSHIP	Any of the following questions can not be asked: Are you a citizen of the United States? Are your parents/spouses a US citizen? When did you acquire US citizenship? Are you/spouse/parent native born or naturalized?	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject. The HR Specialist may verify citizenship requirements, if they exist for the job being filled.
NATIONAL ORIGIN	Any of the following questions can not be asked: What language is spoken in your home? What is your native language?	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject.
RACE/COLOR	You may not ask any question that directly or indirectly relates to race or color.	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject.
RELIGION	The following questions can not be asked: What church do you attend? What religious holidays do you observe?	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject.
DISABILITY	You may not ask if someone has a disability, about someone's medical history, or if a medical condition affects the person's abilities.	You may ask if a person can perform specific duties of the job.
SEX	You may not ask any question which inquires as to one's gender. For example, what are your plans regarding having children in the near future? Do you mind having a male/female supervisor? Can you work with a group of men/women?	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject.
MARITAL STATUS/FAMILY	Many of the following questions can not be asked: Are you married? Divorced? Widowed? With whom do you live? Do your children live with you? What ages are your children? Is your husband/wife in the military?	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject. The HR Specialist may verify if other family members work in the County for administrative purposes.
EDUCATION	You may not ask questions that specifically ask the nationality, racial, or religious affiliation of a school; the candidate's education level in general, if not related to the job being filled.	You may ask questions concerning a candidate's academic, vocation, or professional education as long as it pertains to KSAs related to the position being filled.

ORGANIZATIONAL AFFILIATION	You may not ask the following question: To what organization, societies and clubs do you belong?	You may ask questions related to this subject if they are related to the job being filled and how the candidate's participation in the organization may fulfill the KSAs.
POLICE RECORD	Do not ask: Have you ever been arrested?	If the job being filled has special requirements (i.e., bonding), you may ask a question such as: In order to fill this job, you must be bonded. Is there any problem that this presents?
WORK SCHEDULE/TRAVEL	Do not ask any questions that relate to child care, ages of children or other non job-related areas.	If the job being filled has special requirements (i.e., travel, overtime, unusual hours, etc.) these conditions may be stated. For example: In this job you would have to travel 1 week in every month. Does this present a problem to you?
MILITARY DISCHARGE	The following question may not be asked: Were you honorably discharged from military service?	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject. The HR Specialist may verify this information if there is a requirement to do so.
ECONOMIC STATUS	The following questions may not be asked: Do you have a good credit rating? Do you have any trouble with bills/collection agencies?	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject.
SECURITY CLEARANCE	The following question may not be asked: Do you have a secret/top secret/other security clearance?	If the job to be filled requires a certain type of security clearance, this condition may be stated. For example: "This job requires a top secret clearance. Does this requirement present any problem?"
PERSONAL PLANS	The following question may not be asked: Do you have plans to live in this area long?	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject.
PARTICIPATION IN CERTAIN ACTIVITIES	Do not ask the following questions: Do you plan to take savings bonds/contribute to the Combined Federal Campaign/join the coffee club/join the Air Force Association?	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject.
MISCELLANEOUS	You should not ask any question that is not job related or necessary for determining a candidate's possession of required KSAs.	You may notify the candidate that statements, misstatements or omissions of significant facts may be cause for non-selection.

Reference Check Form

REFERENCE CHECK FORM

The reference check form may be submitted as a written request but reference checks are better conducted on the telephone. This format may be modified for use with different positions. Check 2 references. Ask follow-up questions as necessary.

Applicant: _____ Position: _____
Contact: _____ Tel/E-mail: _____
Organization: _____
Address: _____

(Identify yourself.) The above-named person has applied to us for employment. He/She has listed you as a former employer and has authorized us to conduct a reference check. We need your assistance in verifying and providing certain information regarding his/her work performance.

1. _____ worked in the _____ department as a(n) _____ from _____ to _____ () correct; () incorrect. If incorrect, please explain.
2. His/Her primary responsibilities were: _____
3. He/She stated that his/her reason for termination was: () correct; () incorrect. If incorrect, please explain: _____
4. How would you evaluate his/her overall work performance?
5. This job calls for the ability to be on time to work regularly and consistently. Was punctuality exhibited by him/her while he/she was employed by you? What about absence?
6. What were his/her greatest strengths?
7. What areas required improvement and/or additional training?
8. Describe how he/she responded to new assignments. Please be specific.
9. Tell me about an assignment he/she performed exceptionally well. Also, tell me about a time when he/she performed unsatisfactorily.
10. How effectively did he/she interact with peers? Senior management? Employees? Customers or clients? Please be specific.
11. This position requires the ability to provide excellent customer service to clients/public. What experience did he/she have doing this? What ability did he/she exhibit to multi-task, meet deadlines and provide courteous customer service? How did he/she handle agitated clients?
12. How did he/she react to criticism? Give a specific example.
13. This job calls for the ability to _____.
What experience did he/she have in doing this? (This question can be expanded to encompass several different factors. Use your job description as a guide.)
14. How would you compare his/her work on termination with his/her work performance at the time of hire?
15. Is there anything else we should know about his/her work performance?
16. Would you rehire him/her? () Yes () No. If not, why not?

Reference conducted by: _____ Date: _____